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Cover Page Footnote

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Assumptions about Consumption in the Archaeology of Late Nineteenth-Century Farmsteads

Niels R. Rinehart

Farming is typically associated with rural environments. The Dubois Site in Albany, New York, however, presented an opportunity to look at a farmstead close to a growing urban center during the second-half of the 19th century. The excavations of the Dubois Site are discussed and the results are compared to the more rural Porter Site, a contemporary 19th-century farmstead. The comparison examines how the different contexts might have impacted consumption and production at the two farms, as well as the treatment of the farmstead landscapes. The two New York sites are then contrasted with four contemporary farm sites in southeastern Vermont. The results indicate that some farmers, although rural, were fully immersed in the late 19th-century market in terms of consumption and production. In contrast, data from the Vermont sites indicate that some farmers remained tied to local markets and did not participate in the wider national market.

L'agriculture est généralement associée à l'environnement rural. Le site Dubois à Albany dans l'état de New York, par contre, offrait une occasion de jeter un coup d'œil sur une ferme située tout près d'un centre urbain qui fut en expansion pendant la seconde moitié du 19^{ième} siècle. Cet article offre une discussion sur les fouilles menées au site Dubois pour ensuite comparer les résultats à ceux du site Porter, une ferme du 19^{ième} siècle contemporaine à celle du site Dubois, mais située dans un milieu plus rural. Cette comparaison a permis d'examiner la façon dont les contextes différents de ces deux fermes peuvent avoir eu un impact sur leur consommation et leur production, mais aussi sur la façon dont le paysage de la ferme a été traité. Des comparaisons similaires ont ensuite été menées entre deux autres sites de l'état de New York de même que quatre sites contemporains du sud-est de l'état du Vermont. Les résultats ont indiqué que certains agriculteurs, quoiqu'en milieu rural, étaient entièrement plongés dans le marché de la fin du 19^{ième} siècle en ce qui concerne la consommation et la production. Toutefois, les comparaisons avec les sites du Vermont indiquent que certains fermiers semblent être restés davantage liés aux marchés locaux et n'ont pas pris part au marché plus élaboré que représentait le marché national.

Introduction

The Dubois site lies on the southwestern edge of Albany, New York. Today the site sits on a vacant wooded lot adjacent to wetlands and is surrounded by houses (FIG. 1), but in the 19th century and up until the first decades of the 20th century, the region was sparsely populated and lay about three miles from the city limits of Albany. Historical research uncovered the story of the Dubois family living at the site from the middle of the 19th century to the 1890s. The location of a farmstead close to the growing metropolitan center of Albany, a city with connections to the nation and the wider world through the Hudson River, the Erie Canal, the railroad, and multiple roads, presented a potentially interesting research opportunity. Groover (2008: 11) defines the historical archaeology of farmsteads in North America as the archaeology of rural places. Yet the Dubois farm, with its proximity to a relatively large and growing urban center and location along a major road leading out of that

city, was perhaps far less rural than the farms discussed in Groover's (2008) recent book. The opportunity to research the Dubois farm therefore led to questions comparing the Dubois family to other contemporary farming families located in more rural settings.

Questions of consumer choice have played an important role in historical archaeology for decades (Wurst and McGuire 2002). The changing role of consumption on farmsteads and in rural communities has been a frequent topic in the archaeology of farms; these studies document the dramatic changes in consumption among farming communities in the Northeast during the 19th century (Groover 2008). During this period, farmers became increasingly market-oriented (Huey 2000; Peña 2000: 38) as rural people became active participants in the American consumer revolution (Rafferty 2000: 142). The variety of merchandise available along with low costs made these goods attractive to farm families throughout the nation. Household production declined and control of the means of production

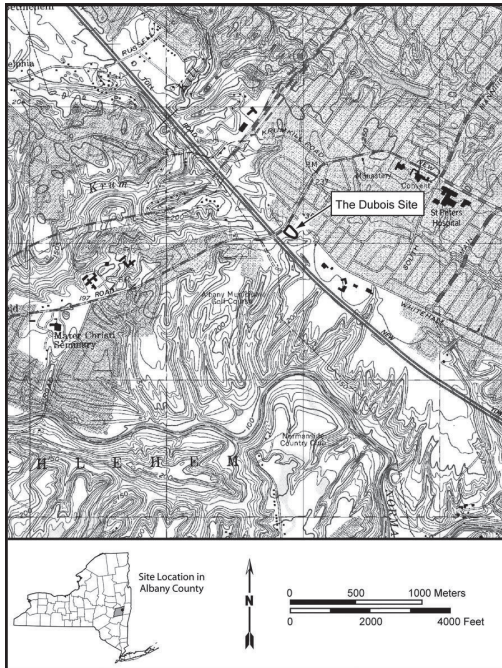


Figure 1. Location of the Dubois site (USGS 1953 [Photorevised 1980] from Berger 2009a: 2)

switched from the household to the market and those that ran the market (Clark 1979: 169). As demand for goods in rural areas expanded, inland towns grew and diversified to provide the needed goods and services (Clark 2006: 152). Howard Russell (1982: 189) writes that as a result “the entire United States tended to become one vast market”.

Understanding how these changes affected farmsteads in different locations is one of the primary research goals for farmstead research (Groover 2008:15). While the uniqueness of any farm’s location makes the creation of a simple dichotomy between urban and rural problematic, this study will define urban and rural based on the proximity of the farm to an urban center, in this case, Albany, NY. The key questions guiding these comparisons are how might the different locations have affected the choices people made? Are there differences in consumption, particularly when looking at the most archaeologically visible artifact type, ceramics? Are there differences in the maintenance of the farmstead landscape? What might the relationship be between production and location? Answering these questions might allow interpretations of how different families

portrayed themselves within their local communities.

Based on their proximity to an urban center and the connections between the Dubois and Porter farms and the towns and cities that surrounded them, it is possible to define one as more urban and the other as more rural. The Dubois farm was a general mixed grain and livestock farm throughout its occupation. It is defined as a more urban farmstead as it lay within three or four miles of Albany along a major road leading into the city (Berger 2009a). The Porter site in Coventry, Chenango County, New York (Groover 2008; Lewandowski and Loren 1995; Lewandowski and Versaggi 1995; Rafferty 1997, 2000) is defined as a rural farmstead (Groover 2008: 99; Rafferty 2000: 125) and was located between 20 and 35 miles from Afton, Bainbridge, Greene, and Binghamton. The Porters followed the trend of many prosperous farms during the second half of the 19th century and expanded their agricultural operations to become more involved in wider regional and national markets (Groover 2008: 99). Their holdings over this period increased exponentially as they made the transition from a general mixed-grain and livestock farm to capital-intensive farming with a commercial dairy. On the other hand, there is little indication in either the historical or archaeological records that Dubois family changed their production strategies during the second half of the 19th century (Berger 2009a).

The Dubois Site

Background

Daniel Dubois and his family were tenants on the land before buying it in 1849 (ACCC 1849) and no records were found indicating any earlier occupations on the property. In 1850, the Dubois family owned 85 acres (TAB. 1), including 75 acres improved and 10 acres unimproved. By 1860, the family had sold a total of 20 acres reducing their holdings to 65 acres of which only three were unimproved (ACCC 1851; USBC 1860a, 1860b). The earliest available map (Gould and Moore 1855) places the Dubois family home to the southwest of the area of investigation and no structures are indicated within the investigation area (FIG. 2).

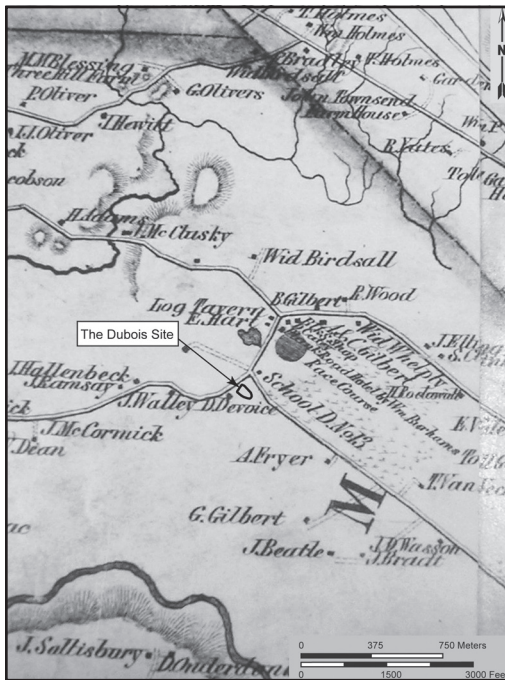


Figure 2. Location of the Dubois Site in 1855. (Gould and Moore 1855 after Berger 2009: 10.)

The 1866 Beers map indicates that “G. Carey” lived in the house and the Dubois family had moved to a house roughly 75 m (250 ft.) to the southwest of the intersection of New Scotland Road with Whitehall Road at the northeastern edge of the site (FIG. 3). This map presents the only documented structure within the investigated area. The next available map dates to 1893 (USGS 1893a) and no structures are indicated within the site area.

The records outlining the household history at the Dubois farmstead are not complete, and, as a result, are difficult to follow. In 1850, Daniel and Sarah Ann Dubois lived at the farm with their daughter Susan L. (USBC 1850). By 1860 the household had expanded to include a farm laborer Samuel Sharp and his wife Mary. Abraham Fitch married Susan Dubois sometime before 1875 and the couple stayed on at the farm. By the 1870s, the Sharps were no longer living at the farmstead. By 1875, an 18-year-old, Irish-born servant named Thomas Geary was listed as a resident of the farm (NYSBC 1875). Census records from 1880 list Abraham (Abram) Fitch, husband of Susan Fitch *née* Dubois, as the owner of the

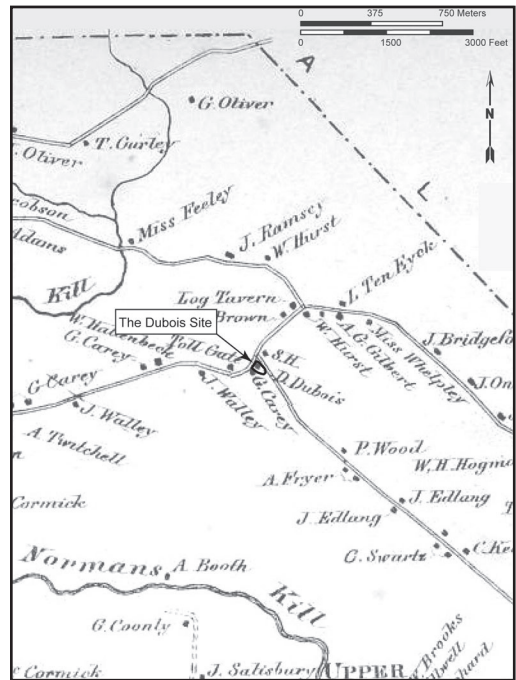


Figure 3. Location of the Dubois Site in 1866. (Beers 1866.)

28-hectare (68-acre) Dubois farm (USBC 1880), indicating that Daniel Dubois likely had died by that time.

Records from 1895 indicate that the Sharps conveyed the land back to Fitch. Possibly, the farm was sold to Samuel Sharp or Sharp’s descendants between 1880 and 1895 but was returned to Fitch in 1895. The 1900 census lists Abraham Fitch, but the census is in poor condition and no additional information could be gathered on his household (USBC 1900). The census lists Jacob Walley, the long-time owner of the neighboring Walley Farm, but not Abraham Fitch. It is possible that the census taker recorded the information in geographical order following street routes and, if so, the absence of the Fitch/Dubois family from the census may indicate they were no longer living at this address. With no buildings illustrated on the 1893 USGS (1893a) map, the farm was likely vacated before this date. The property remained as farmland for several decades after the Dubois home was abandoned, and local informants describe horse stables and a bean farm on the property (Healy 2008; Madigan 2008). Francis Madigan (2008), a

long-time resident of the neighborhood born in 1918, remembered the Dubois site as an unwanted, vacant lot.

Agricultural production makes farm sites unique and therefore different from urban sites (Wurst and Conklin 2008). However, the data available on production in the historical record for the Dubois site are uneven with large gaps in the available information (TAB. 1). Despite these gaps, it appears that production at the Dubois farm was relatively consistent with little-to-no growth throughout the second half of the 19th century. As discussed in greater detail below, there is little evidence for any expansion or variation in production at the Dubois farm, and the farm likely remained a general mixed grain and livestock farm throughout its occupation with little investment in increasing its agricultural capacity.

The quantities of crops and livestock appear fairly consistent between 1850 and 1860 with similar amounts of potatoes, rye, oats, butter, and hay reported, as well as relatively similar numbers of horses, dairy cows, cattle, and swine. Some changes occurred between 1860 and 1865, including a steep drop in rye and oats, the introduction of buckwheat and apples, and the loss of the cows (NYSBC 1865). Additional data are not available until 1880 and the information is provided in acreage and not bushels such that it is not readily comparable to earlier quantities. According to the 1880 census, the Dubois farm continued to produce potatoes, rye, oats, and corn but no longer grew buckwheat and apples. This document reports no livestock, though presumably some livestock were present but not listed. The data on the assessed value of the farm are inconsistent, but between 1850 and 1860 the farm's value increased from \$4,500 to \$4,600 and between 1865 and 1875, the house(s)'s value increased from \$1,000 to \$1,500 (USBC 1870a; USBC 1870b). No additional values are available. The biggest change in the farm's production is the drop in rye and oats production in 1865 and the introduction of buckwheat and apples, although what these changes in production might have meant in terms of investment and labor is likely beyond the available data. Based on the agricultural data from 1850 and 1860, production at the farm remained relatively stable over this time period. The data from 1880 indicates that the productive capacity of the farm had not

increased dramatically over the past two decades, supporting the interpretation that the Dubois family did not transition to intensive commercial farming during the second half of the 19th century.

In 1850, farms in the Dubois' town of Bethlehem ranged between 50 and 200 acres, with values assessed between \$2,500 and \$23,200 (USBC 1850), placing the Dubois farm, valued at \$4,500, at the lower end of that range. The interpretation of the Dubois farm at the lower-end of this range in relation to other Bethlehem farms is supported by the values of similar-sized farms in the region at between \$6,000 and \$8,000 dollars. At 80 and 90 acres, these other Bethlehem farms were roughly the same size as the Dubois farm, yet, they were valued at nearly twice as much. It is unknown what portion of the other farms was unimproved. The quality of the land itself may support these interpretations ranking the Dubois farm in relation to other Bethlehem farms. The lack of development on this parcel is perhaps indicative of the land's poor quality. All the surrounding properties were developed by World War II whereas the Dubois farmstead and several surrounding acres were abandoned (although farmed for several decades into the 20th century) for over a hundred years. The farmstead itself sat on poorly-drained ground and lay immediately adjacent to wetlands with a ravine to the south. As cited above, Madigan (2008), a local resident born in the neighborhood in 1918, described the property as undesirable.

This summary should not be taken to mean that the Dubois family was "poor" since poverty connotes an inability to survive. The Dubois family evidently had income. They were able to support one or two laborers-in-residence. Although such laborers were readily available, inexpensive (Russell 1982: 290) and necessary, they were still an added expense. As discussed below in greater detail, the Dubois family was able to move and build new farm structures possibly three times in about 30 years. And they appear to have maintained the production of their farm. But their inability to grow, as well as the contrast of the assessed value of their farm with other Bethlehem farms, indicates that the Dubois family, though not poor, was at the lower-end of the economic scale.

Excavations at the Dubois Site

Initial research of the property at the intersection of Whitehall Road and New Scotland Avenue identified the Dubois farmstead on the Gould and Moore (1855) and Beers (1866) maps (FIGS. 1, 2, AND 3). A walkover of the site revealed several foundations and possible wells or cisterns (FIG. 4). The excavation of shovel tests and slot trenches measuring 0.5 x 1 m (1.6 x 3.3 ft.) produced artifacts dating to the second half of the 19th century in locations surrounding the foundations. The excavation of 21 test units, all but three of which measured 1 x 1 m (3.3 x 3.3 ft.), followed the shovel tests (FIG. 4). After these excavations, a backhoe peeled back the surface in four locations to look for additional features, in particular privies. A well and a cistern were also machine excavated (FIG. 4) (Berger 2009a).

The archaeological excavations revealed seven structures, a sheet midden, as well as the well and cistern. Structure 1 was a substantial structure measuring about 6.5 x 8.5 m (21 x 28 ft.). The foundations were made of well-cut, neatly-fitting, dry-laid stone that extended to a depth of about 70 cm (2.3 feet) below the surface. A cistern was located adjacent to the northeast side of the structure. No middens were located in excavations around Structure 1, although the remains of a broad builder's trench were found on the east and south sides of the structure. The assemblage from Structure 1 was smaller than anticipated given the substance of the foundations, however, a concentration of domestic materials was found, particularly in the lower levels of a test unit (TU 1) excavated within the structure. The top levels of this unit, as well as shovel tests and slot trenches excavated within the structure, produced large numbers of architectural remains and charred wood. The upper levels of the units within the

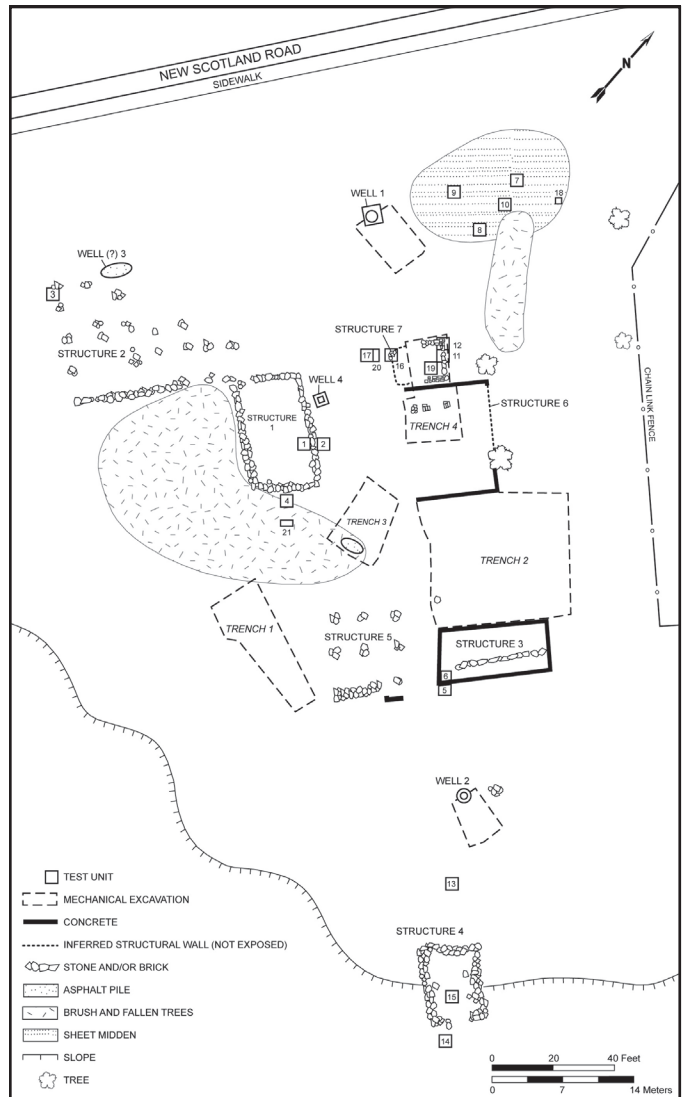


Figure 4. Site plan from the Dubois site (Revised from Berger 2010: 35.)

structure also produced several artifacts from the early 20th century. These artifacts indicate that the structure was likely left standing after the apparent abandonment of the farm at the close of the 19th century before finally burning down. Artifacts dating to the latter half of the 19th century included a single piece of porcelain tea ware with a *terminus post quem* (TPQ) date of 1885 recovered from the bottom level of Test Unit 1.

Excavations also identified a small structure labeled Structure 7, adjacent to Structure 1 (FIG. 4), that measured 15.75 m² (170 ft.²),

located about 15 m (50 ft.) to the south of the sheet midden. Structure 7 consisted of a roughly-laid, shallow, stone foundation with minimal amounts of brick and mortar, extending to a depth of no more than 20 cm (0.66 ft.) below the surface. Three piles of brick, stone, and mortar were identified to the southeast of the structure, perhaps from supports for a porch attached to this structure. Excavations within and around Structure 7 produced a relatively large amount of domestic refuse, including ceramics that were largely recovered along the inside of the east/northeast wall where they may have been swept while cleaning the floor. The artifact assemblage appears to be contemporary to that recovered from the sheet midden (TAB. 2), with the ceramic collection dominated by whiteware. Given the small size of the structure and the presence of large quantities of domestic refuse, it may have served as a salient structure associated with domestic production, such as a summer kitchen or perhaps as a residence for servants.

As illustrated by Figure 4, the investigation of the Dubois site uncovered several other structures labeled Structures 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. However, as opposed to the relatively large numbers of domestic artifacts recovered from

Structures 1 and 7 and the sheet midden, excavations of these other structures produced largely architectural assemblages, including an abundance of nails (handwrought, machine-cut, and wire nails) and window glass. Structure 4 produced the largest quantity of hardware, tools, and machinery, including farm equipment and horse-tackle. The construction of Structure 4 appeared to be identical to Structure 1, with well-laid and well-cut limestone, and so may have been contemporary. Structures 2 and 5 consisted of a series of limestone piles, some dry-laid and some cemented, that likely once supported these structures. The specific uses of these outbuildings remain unclear, but they are defined as outbuildings based on the almost complete absence of domestic refuse. In addition, Allen (1852: 56) writes that it was advisable to raise outbuildings off the ground to allow dogs and cats the opportunity to roam freely beneath them, chasing away rats and other vermin.

A dense concentration of artifacts, or possible sheet midden, was identified through test excavations in the northwest portion of the site (FIG. 4). Although no structural remains were located in association with this sheet midden, it is possible that this feature was associated with the house from the 1866 Beers map that

Table 2: Quantities of ceramic types from Structures 1 and 7 and the sheet midden.

Ceramic Type	TPQ	Structure 7	Sheet Midden	Structure 1
Westerwald	1620		1	
Stoneware, Nottinghamaam	1700		1	
Creeamware	1762		18	
Pearlware	1775	15	155	
Pearlware, dipped general	1790		5	
Pearlware, underglaze handpainted, polyhrome	1795		5	
Pearlware, transfer-printed, blue with stipple	1800		16	
Stoneware, gray salt-glazed w/Albany slip	1800	9	17	35
Porcelain, hard-paste, gilded band	1820			1
Whiteware	1820	59	172	18
Yellowware	1827			5
Ironstone	1840		1	47
Ironstone, embossed rim	1850			1
Stoneware, gray salt-glazed w/ Bristol and Albany slips	1880		1	
Porcelain, hard-paste, decal, gilded	1885			1

once stood in the same approximate location. Placing the main house along the dominant road was common practice in the Northeast at that time. Lewis Allen (1852: 29) writes rather disparagingly of the practice, explaining that Northern farmers placed their homes directly adjacent to the main roads regardless of how these locations might impact their ability to conduct activities around the farm. New Scotland Avenue was an important toll road at the time and the importance of the road to the farm can be seen by the slight west-southwest orientation of the existing foundations facing the road. So it is conceivable that the Dubois family wanted their home directly on the road. Assuming that Beers (1866) correctly identified the location of the house, it is possible that the widening of the road as well as the construction of the sidewalk and the placement of utilities have removed structural remains, at least within the excavation area. It is therefore possible that the midden lies in the approximate location of the house illustrated on the Beers (1866) map and the sheet midden is a deposit, presumably a backyard deposit, associated with this house (FIGS. 3 AND 4). No evidence exists for a structure behind or to the side of the midden, indicating that it is unlikely these materials were deposited in a side or front-yard.

Analysis and Discussion

Comparison of the Dubois and Porter Sites

As stated in the introduction, the archaeological investigation of farmsteads is associated with rural contexts (Groover 2008: 11). The location of the Dubois farm on the other hand, was likely considered less rural than the farmstead sites discussed in Groover's (2008) book. In light of the changing relationship between farmers and the market during the 19th century, both in terms of the production and consumption that took place on these farms, the proximity of the Dubois farm to Albany might allow for an interesting comparison to see how different locations might have influenced these changing relationships.

Excavations at the Dubois farm resulted in the recovery of a disappointingly small assemblage scattered relatively thinly across the site, producing an average of 67 artifacts per square

meter excavated whereas excavations at the Porter site encountered rich middens with an average of 363 artifacts per square meter. Rafferty (1997, 2000) noted a change in the disposal of refuse from the middle to the end of the 19th century with the earlier deposits broadcast widely across the yard and the later materials found more centralized and concentrated in the backyard. Why is there an apparent difference between the two farmsteads in the disposal of garbage? Was the Dubois family more particular about where they disposed of their garbage than the Porters? Could the differences be the result of changes in the life histories of the two families? Or could the differences result from the taphonomic realities of the two excavations?

To answer these questions it is important to look at 19th-century farm landscapes. As discussed previously, farmstead sites differ from urban sites precisely because they were farms. It is therefore important to consider the farming landscapes of these sites as farms and not just as locations of domestic debris (Beaudry 2002; Wurst and Conklin 2008). Achieving this goal is complicated by the fact that these projects were part of cultural resource management investigations such that the project dictated the potential boundaries of the investigation, typically restricting the investigation to the domestic area. But it is possible to look at the visible landscape from the perspective of changing ideas governing the organization of farmsteads, and in particular, changing ideas governing the disposal of trash.

Concepts of farm landscapes were changing during the mid-19th century in response to new ideas about cleanliness. Earlier farmers had arranged their farms in a "strewn landscape pattern" in which the farmstead grew as the household matured (Groover 2008: 24). Greater organization replaced this more organic approach by the mid-19th century. Parallels evolved between "success/cleanliness and failure/slovenliness, both personal and around the farmstead" (Wurst 1993: 193) such that a clean farm became indicative of a successful farm (Versaggi 2000: 49). The press from the many agricultural schools, societies, journals, and other publications springing up during the 19th century portrayed the lazy (and therefore unsuccessful farmer) as the dirty Farmer

Slack, versus the clean and industrious and therefore successful Farmer Thrifty (also known as Farmer Snug) (Manning-Sterling 2000; Starbuck 2008). The agricultural press was flush with suggestions for improving a farm, but many farmers apparently resented these improvements and resisted them, seeing it as impractical advice from outsiders insensitive to the economic risk involved in change (Russell 1982: 197). One only has to read books written during this period to understand why farmers may have responded with such obstinacy; in his 1852 book, Allen accuses farmers of "an absolute barbarism" (Allen 1852: 15) and of keeping farms that were "offensive to the eye of any lover of rural harmony" (Allen 1852: 14). Attitudes had shifted by the Civil War, however, by which time many farmers were apparently more willing to change (Manning-Sterling 2000: 188; Russell 1982: 242).

Perhaps these changing ideas about the disposal of garbage might explain differences in the dispersal of artifacts across the Dubois and Porter sites. It is possible that the changes in refuse disposal noted by Rafferty (1997; 2000) with earlier deposits broadcast widely versus later materials found more centralized and concentrated in the backyard reflect a desire to follow changing ideas of cleanliness. Manning-Sterling (2000: 210) noted a similar temporal difference in the chronology of garbage disposal in her excavations at the Mumma farmstead in Maryland. If the sheet midden at the Dubois site was located behind the house illustrated on the Beers (1866) map, then the location of this garbage might reflect a similar desire to appear clean and to dispose of garbage out of view of the road. The lack of refuse associated with the later house (Structure 1) might indicate a greater desire to be clean resulting in even less refuse disposed behind or anywhere around this structure.

Groover (2008: 79) discusses the life-cycles that occur on farmsteads and their possible relationship to the archaeological record. As a new generation took over a farm, the new heads of the household often enacted changes such as altering the locations of refuse disposal. This process produced what Groover (2008: 81) calls midden shift, creating a sort of horizontal "stratigraphy" of middens. As discussed previously, there were several life-cycle

events at the Dubois farmstead, including the three moves the family apparently made. At least one such move produced the abandonment of the sheet midden located in these excavations, but no other middens were identified, and as a result there was little-to-no midden shift but rather midden disappearance.

It is also possible that the Porters simply had more trash to toss out. The lower-financial resources of the Dubois family may have limited the amount of material they had for disposal. However, as illustrated by the census records and their ability to hire staff and build new structures, they had income. In addition, excavations at the Keith site (O'Donovan and Wurst 2002), also in Coventry, New York, identified the residence of a poor tenant farming family whose poverty did not keep them from disposing of large quantities of garbage around their house. So the Dubois family may have been disposing of garbage in limited quantities behind their house during the mid-19th century while the Porters broadcast garbage around their yard. Then, later in the 19th century, while the Porters limited their trash disposal to behind the house, the Dubois appear to have disposed of very little trash behind their house or anywhere visible on their property. It is possible that the Dubois family placed its garbage in privies that, unfortunately, were not located despite an intensive backhoe search across the site.

Contrasting the different contexts in which the two families lived adds to this discussion. The Dubois farm and their relationship to other farms in Bethlehem have been discussed previously. What stands out when examining the two farms is the marked growth experienced by the Porters over the same time period. The Porter land holdings increased from 80 acres (40 unimproved) to 275 (60 unimproved) in 25 years. The value of their farm grew from \$2,518 in 1850 to \$11,383 in 1875 and exceeded the value of their Coventry neighbors in some cases by twice as much (Rafferty 2000: 127). The productive capacity of the Porter farm greatly increased over this period, particularly when compared to the Dubois farm. In addition to the horses, dairy cows, cattle, and swine found at the Dubois farm, the Porters also had oxen and sheep, and, in addition to potatoes, oats, rye, butter, hay, and corn grown at the Dubois farmstead,

the Porters were also producing wool and other products intermittently including cheese, wheat, peas, apples, cider, maple sugar, and molasses. The Porter family clearly made the transition from a general mixed grain and livestock farm to a capital-intensive farm and commercial dairy (Groover 2008: 101), indicating their ability and willingness to take risks and invest in the growth of the farmstead.

The different productive trajectories of the two farms might lead to the interpretation that the Dubois family were "little fish in a large pond", a large pond comprised of their wealthier Bethlehem neighbors. The Dubois family and their community, living so close to Albany, may have seen themselves within the context of the wealth of that city. The Porters on the other hand, were big fish in a somewhat smaller pond. In other words, perhaps there were no "Joneses" for the Porters to keep up with whereas the Dubois family may have been surrounded by "Joneses". Perhaps, given their apparent status in Coventry, the Porters did not feel the same pressure to keep up appearances and to adopt changing ideas governing the disposal of refuse. The Dubois family, on the other hand, living in what appears to have been a very successful milieu, may have felt more pressure to follow changing ideas about maintaining a clean and orderly farm. They may have felt pressure to maintain an outward appearance of success, a pressure that may have resulted in the construction of new buildings in the last quarter of the 19th century.

But if the two farms differed in how they disposed of their garbage, how might they have differed in what they consumed? Might the consumption of the two families reflect the different contexts in which they lived? When discussing changes in consumption experienced by the growing market reach of consumers in England and America, Shammas (1990: 299) writes that "...the individual who drank tea in a teacup, wore a printed cotton gown, and put linen on the bed could be the same person who ingested too few calories to work all day and lived in a one-room house." According to Shammas (1990), many people in the past, when faced with new and changing possibilities for consumption, lived beyond their means. Once something became possible it became necessary. Much like their

descendants in the early 21st century, the people discussed by Shammas (1990) spent money to satisfy needs created by the expanding market. Perhaps the exposure of a family like the Dubois to the greater wealth of their surroundings influenced them to purchase display-worthy materials. The Porter family, experiencing great financial and productive success and rising to the top of a community that was not as financially rich as Bethlehem, may not have experienced these same pressures. As Rafferty (2000: 127) writes, the Porter household was "probably not fully adopting the ideological trappings of the urban middle-class culture." Groover (2008: 105) notes a switch to the disposal (and therefore consumption) of less expensive items in the last decades of the 19th century at the Porter farm.

Given these possibilities, the investigation of the Dubois site began with the thought that a comparison of the two sites might identify a greater effort by the Dubois than the Porters to invest in expensive display items and to follow popular trends. A number of materials would have been on display for all to see, such as food, houses, clothes, and shoes as well as their manner of speech or their demeanor. The most readily available artifact type to address these questions at both sites was ceramics. The collections were divided into three categories for the purpose of this analysis: Dubois, Porter Early, and Porter Late (FIGS. 5 AND 6). The Porter assemblage was divided between those contexts dating to the earlier versus later portions of the second half of the 19th century. It was not possible to create separate sub-assemblages for the ceramics from the Dubois site as 79% (n = 497) of the ceramics come from the sheet midden and Structure 7, both contexts dating to the third quarter of the 19th century. The size of the sample dating to the last quarter of the 19th century was insufficient to separate the ceramics from the Dubois site into similar early and late assemblages.

While the lack of mutually comparable assemblages is problematic, the Dubois assemblage covers the third quarter of the 19th century which is the period for which the historical data exists for the two farms. The sheet midden and Structure 7 are thought to date from just before the Civil War to about 1875, a

time span that roughly covers the listed historical data for the two farms (TAB. 2; Rafferty 2000: 127) and roughly corresponds to the Porter Early Assemblage.

The comparisons were conducted by calculating the percentages of each decoration and manufactured type present within the assemblages based on raw sherd counts for the Dubois site and vessel counts for the Porter site. While the comparison of an assemblage quantified by sherd counts with another assemblage quantified by vessel counts is problematic, the comparison is fundamentally ordinal, relying on the conclusion that more or less of one type was present at one farm or the other. As a result, the impact of variation resulting from the two methods of ceramic quantification should be minimized.

Although whiteware technology had replaced pearlware technology decades before the Dubois family purchased their farm and moved to the location of the excavations sometime after 1855, the Dubois family disposed of proportionally more pearlware than whiteware and a far greater quantity of pearlware than the Porters (FIG. 5). The Early Porter assemblage, on the other hand, contained a far higher percentage of whiteware than pearlware

with whiteware dominating the Early Porter assemblage from the third quarter of the 19th century. The percentage of whiteware the Porters disposed of dropped off steeply by the later 19th century and was replaced by ironstone as the dominant ceramic type in the Late Porter assemblage. Although ironstone is present at the Dubois site, far smaller quantities were found at the Dubois site than at the Porter site. The review appears to indicate that the Porters were more current when it came to buying new ceramic wares, whereas the Dubois family was still using pearlware years after whiteware and even ironstone were being produced.

Although the differences in price between different ceramic types became less significant as the 19th century progressed, transfer-printed wares remained more expensive than plain wares and other decorative techniques (Majestic and O'Brien 1987; Miller 1980, 1991). In both the Early and Late assemblages, the Porters disposed of a larger percentage of transfer-printed wares throughout the second half of the 19th century than the Dubois family (FIG. 6). The proportion of transfer-printed to plain wares changed during the second half of the 19th century at the Porter farm, likely

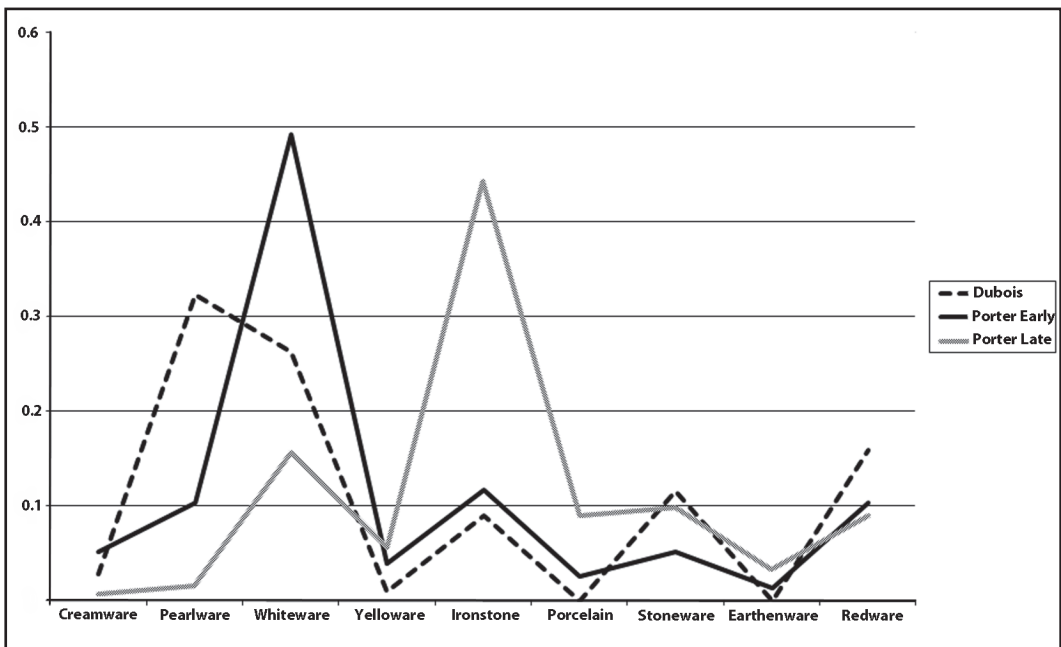


Figure 5. Distribution of ware types from the Porter and Dubois sites. (Figure by author.)

reflecting changing styles and changes in production of ceramics after the middle of the 19th century. Transfer printing went out of style for several decades during the second half of the 19th century and was replaced by plain ironstone, often with embossed decorations. However, despite being plain, ironstone was relatively expensive even when compared to contemporary transfer-printed wares (Majestic and O'Brien 1987; Miller 1980, 1991). Groover (2008: 105) writes of the change in consumption practices at the Porter farm from the purchase of expensive transfer-printed wares to cheaper plain wares towards the end of the 19th century. This change may correspond with the transfer of the farm from Loren Porter to his son Charles in 1885 (Groover 2008: 105). However, many of the ironware vessels are undecorated (Rafferty 2000: 136). Of the 62 ironware vessels recovered from the entire Porter site, 45% (n = 28) were undecorated of which 24 dated to the last decades of the 19th century. The presence of these undecorated ironware vessels may account for the rise in undecorated (or plain) ceramics from the Early Porter to Late Porter assemblages. This increase likely reflected a consumer response by the Porters to the

greater popularity of these undecorated ironstone wares later in the century (Majestic and O'Brien 1987; Miller 1980, 1991). In conclusion, when reviewing different decorative ceramic types, the Porters appear to have purchased and disposed of more current and expensive ceramics than the Dubois family indicating that the Porters were more aware of what was current on the market and more willing to spend money to remain current.

Based on this evidence, not only was the Dubois family utilizing older and less expensive ceramics, they may also have been using mismatched sets. It was not possible to quantify and therefore validate this assertion in comparison to the Porter site or other sites because sufficient comparable data were not available; however, it appears that both the pearlware and whiteware assemblages from the Dubois site include a wide variety of decorative types. As noted at the Keith site, it is possible that this variety of decoration indicates that the Dubois family used secondhand tea and table wares, either from purchases or heirlooms, further indicating their lack of purchasing new and up-to-date items (O'Donovan and Wurst 2002). The interpretation for the use of second-hand ceramics is strengthened by

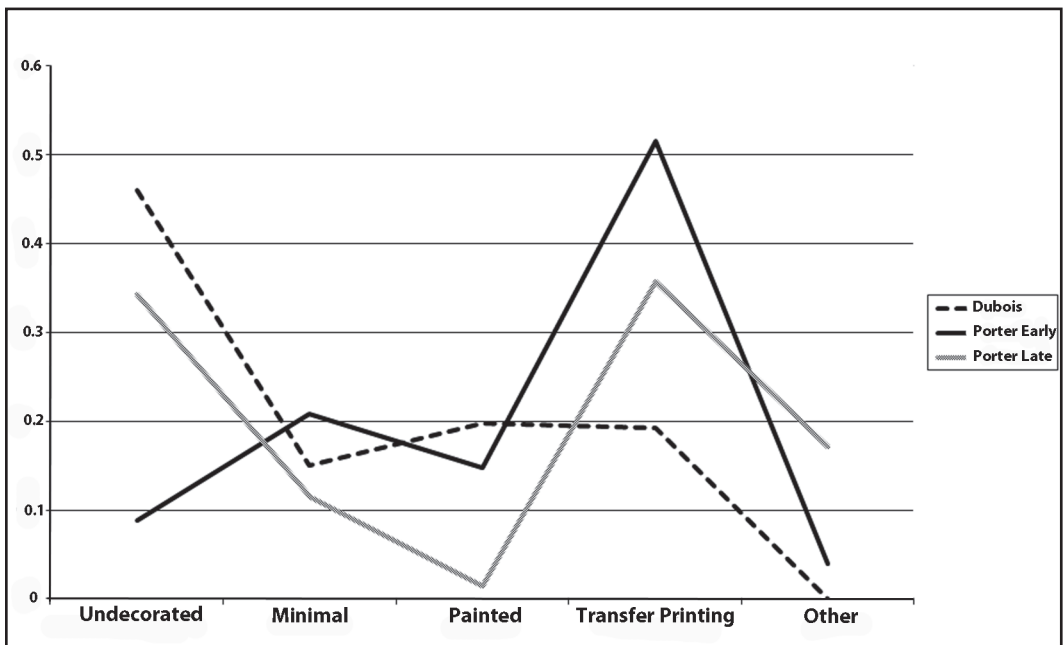


Figure 6. Distribution of types of ceramic decorations from the Porter and Dubois sites. (Figure by author.)

the presence of large quantities of pearlware at the Dubois site, indicating the use of this ware type during the third quarter of the 19th century at a time when whiteware and then ironstone had typically replaced the older pearlware tea and table wares elsewhere.

The Porters also consumed and discarded proportionally more tea ware than the Dubois, presumably indicating a greater emphasis on this form of entertaining with its attention to refinement and conspicuous display for the Porter family (TAB. 3). Roughly half the ceramics found at the Porter site are tea wares. These data may also indicate that the Dubois family was intent on conserving what they had, whereas the Porters had more to dispose, possibly because they purchased new sets of tea ware to replace the old ones. Thus the large number of tea ware vessels found at the Porter site may be the result of the disposal of old sets as they replaced them with new sets.

In summary, this comparison began with

Table 3: Percentage of tea ware versus tableware

	Tea ware	Tableware
Dubois Entire	21	79
Porter Early	49	51
Porter Late	57	43

the idea that the different regional contexts and the placement of these two farms in different contexts may have impacted the choices the two families made in consumption, production, and the maintenance of their farmsteads. Perhaps the Dubois felt a need, that the Porters did not, to make an extra effort to appear more successful, given both their surroundings and lack of financial and productive growth. Perhaps this pressure exhibited itself in their consumption of ceramics. These ideas, however, were not borne out by the comparison of the ceramic assemblages from the two sites. However, the Porter family may have paid less attention than the Dubois family to where they discarded refuse across their farm. There are multiple potential explanations for this outcome, but as explained previously, one possible explanation is that the Dubois family was more particular about maintaining the outward appearance of a clean, and therefore successful, farmstead. It remains possible that the Dubois family did purchase more expensive

and up-to-date ceramics in the final decades of the 19th century, perhaps including matching sets of tea ware. Perhaps, given their apparent predilection for cleanliness, those materials were disposed of in such a way, maybe in privies that could not be found during the investigation of the site despite extensive excavations and the use of a backhoe.

What this comparison does not account for are the new structures the Dubois family built, particularly the structures built during the last quarter of the 19th century and possibly as little as a decade before the farm's abandonment. The Dubois family's investment in these new structures indicates a willingness and an ability to allocate wealth and invest in the farmstead. So, although the Dubois family may not have been willing to spend money on new ceramics, they apparently did use their income to construct new buildings. Although the new buildings likely sent a message to the community, the construction of these buildings does not appear to have reflected a change in production at the farm.

By comparing the Porter and Dubois households, this study provides further illustration of the connection between a more rural family like the Porters and the wider national market. The Porters purchased current and expensive products and were eager to engage in the type of socializing that involved expensive tea wares. They also altered the production of their farm to capital-intensive farming, something the Dubois family was unable or unwilling to do. As discussed by Rafferty (1997, 2000), the Porter site provides an example of the extent to which the market was everywhere, influencing everyone, therefore reaffirming Rafferty's (1997, 2000) conclusions about the connectedness of rural families and communities with the wider world. A group of contemporary 19th-century farmstead sites from southeastern Vermont, however, may indicate that it is potentially problematic to assume that even if the market was available to everyone that everyone was therefore influenced by it and that the choices they made as consumers were determined by it.

The Four Vermont Farmsteads

Recent investigations in the foothills of the Green Mountains in southeastern Vermont resulted in the discovery of four relatively rural farmstead sites (the Bemis [VT-WN-279],

Jaquith [VT-WN-455], Salisbury [VT-WD-276], and Whitney [VT-WN-456] sites) dating to the second half of the 19th century. The sites are discussed in greater detail elsewhere (Berger 2009b, 2009c; Rinehart 2010). The investigation of each site consisted of a grid of 50 x 50 cm (1.6 x 1.6 ft.) shovel tests placed at intervals of 5 m (16 ft.) in addition to three 1x1 m (3.3 x 3.3 ft.) test units excavated at the Jaquith and Whitney sites. These excavations produced a total of 3,481 artifacts, including 1,074 ceramics. Background research included a review of historical maps (Beers 2006a, 2006b; Chance 1856; McClellan 1856), locating homes in the approximate locations of the identified sites as well as a preliminary review of census data (Heritage Quest Online 2009) for the families associated with these homes.

The Salisbury site lies in Palmerston, Vermont and consists of several structural remains including a cellar hole found within the project area as well as possible pens and at least three barn ramps (Berger 2009b; Rinehart 2010). Historical maps from 1856 and 1866 (Beers 2006a; McClellan 1856) and a local resident (McDermet 2007) indicate a road known as the "Old Country Road" or "West Country Road" that once ran along the northern boundary of the site. The Salisbury house is absent from the Beers (2006a) map dating to 1866 and the USGS (1893b) map from 1893 so the farm was probably abandoned around the time of the Civil War. Berger excavated 118 shovel tests for a total excavated area of 29.5 m² (317 ft.²) The shovel tests were placed at 5 m (16.4 ft.) intervals to the west, northwest, and southwest of the cellar hole, within the portion of the site that lay within the project area, recovering 1,105 artifacts. The excavations took place in a side yard to the west of the house with the front of the house facing north towards the old road. The majority of artifacts were architectural, most found within about 10 m (33 ft.) of the cellar hole, including large numbers of brick fragments that were discarded in the field. The largest single recovered artifact type was window glass, among other architectural materials including hand wrought and machine-cut nails. The kitchen assemblage however (n = 368) was spread far more evenly across the investigated portion of the site. This assemblage consisted of 363 ceramic fragments and included stoneware

and redware cooking vessels, creamware, pearlware, whiteware tableware, and a single piece of plain ironstone tableware. A small assemblage (n = 11) of pearlware, whiteware, porcelain, and ironstone tea ware was also recovered.

The Bemis site sits in Townsend, Vermont along Deer Valley Road and consists of a cellar hole and additional structural remains including retaining walls to the west and north, supporting the hill in which the cellar hole sits. Low stone walls from what were likely animal pens lie nearby. Maps (McClellan 1856; Beers 2006a) illustrate a residence attributed to Bemis in the general vicinity. The census data for the Bemis family disappears by the turn of the century so the farm was likely abandoned before the beginning of the 20th century. No structure is evident at the site's location on the USGS (1933) map from 1933. Fifty eight shovel tests covering a total area of 14.5 m² (156 ft.²) were excavated at 5 meter [16.4 feet] intervals around the foundation and the possible animal pens (Berger 2009c; Rinehart 2010). The excavations produced a total of 220 artifacts, including pearlware and whiteware ceramics, the majority from the slope behind the house.

The Jaquith site is located along Simonsville Road in Andover, on the south bank of the Williams River. The structural remains for the Jaquith site included a visible foundation outside the project area and an additional foundation uncovered through excavations within the project area. Historical maps (Beers 2006b and Chance 1856) illustrate a house in this location attributed to the Jaquiths. A total of 110 shovel tests for 27.5 m² (296 ft.²) in a 5 m [16.4 ft.] grid and a 1 x 1 m (3.3 x 3.3 ft.) unit adjacent to a cellar hole found in a shovel test were excavated at the site (Berger 2009b; Rinehart 2010). The excavations produced a total of 522 artifacts, the majority of which (n = 386) were ceramics, including redware and stoneware cooking vessels as well as creamware, pearlware, and whiteware tea and table wares. Given the preliminary nature of the investigation, it was not possible to determine where the excavations lay in relation to the houses that once stood on the property. Presumably the houses were aligned to the south/southwest to face Simonsville Road. If so, then the shovel tests

were placed within the side yards of the two houses, to the east of the collapsed cellar hole and to the west of the visible stone foundation. The majority of the assemblage came from the single test unit placed within the collapsed cellar hole ($n = 300$), with an additional 100 artifacts recovered from shovel tests located a couple meters to the northeast, near the banks of the Williams River. The other 122 artifacts were scattered relatively evenly to the east/southeast of the collapsed cellar hole.

The Whitney site is located along Barker Road in Cavendish, Vermont. No structural remains were evident although some were encountered during the excavations. Historical maps (Beers 2006b; Chance 1856) illustrate a residence attributed to the Whitney family and the landowner indicated the location of the house that stood on the property until the middle of the 20th century (Moore 2008). The excavations consisted of 116 shovel tests in a 5 m (16.4-ft.) grid and two 1 x 1 m (3.3 x 3.3-ft.) units for a total of excavated area of 31 m² (333.5 ft.²), recovering 1,724 artifacts (Berger 2009b; Rinehart 2010). The excavated structural remains consisted largely of architectural material and smaller numbers of domestic artifacts. The presence of artifacts dating to the 1930s corroborated Moore's (2008) chronology for the house's destruction. Ceramics ($n = 302$) included creamware, pearlware, whiteware, and only two pieces of ironstone, as well as fragments from stoneware and redware cooking vessels. The house presumably faced to the south onto Barker Road. Excavations uncovered artifacts spread relatively evenly across the majority of the site, with the greatest density ($n = 1,053$) directly surrounding the location of the former house as described by the present landowner and the historic maps cited above. The only structural remains encountered were within a single test unit (TU 1) and appear to have consisted of a

storage location, likely destroyed in the mid-20th century.

The four Vermont sites were roughly contemporary to the Dubois and Porter farms. Whereas the Salisburys had probably abandoned their farmstead by the time of the Civil War, the Jaquiths and the Bemises appear to have stayed on till the end of the century. As stated above, the Whitney site was inhabited until the middle of the 20th century. It is not clear when the sites were first occupied.

Although the review of the census data was preliminary due to the limited nature of the investigations, the 1860 census (Heritage Quest Online 2009) indicates that the property values of the Salisbury, Jaquith, and Whitney farms ranged from \$1,200 and \$1,900 with personal property values varying between \$300 and \$900 (TAB. 4). The Bemis family property, however, was assessed at almost twice as much as the other three farms. Although the census data from 1860 portrays the Jaquith, Salisbury, and Whitney families as being in similar financial positions, the Jaquiths appear to have been prominent citizens in Andover at least during the 1880s when Alden Jaquith was a Justice of the Peace and a town grand juror (Child 1884). In addition, census data for the Bemises from the later decades of the 19th century indicate that their fortunes rose considerably during this time period (Heritage Quest Online 2009).

The investigations at the four Vermont sites were preliminary when contrasted with the more extensive investigations at the two New York sites, producing small artifact assemblages. Although additional census and map data are likely available, no information was reviewed on what the Vermont farms were producing and how that production may have changed over the course of the 19th century. While comparing the assessed values of different farms as though these values were

Table 4: Personal and property values from the 1860 census for the Salisburys, Jaquiths, Whitneys and Bemises.

Site	Family	Property	Personal	Total
VT-WN-455	Jaquith	\$1,800	\$425	\$2,225
VT-WD-276	Salisbury	\$1,500	\$800	\$2,300
VT-WN-456	Whitney	\$1,900	\$900	\$2,800
VT-WN-279	Bemis	\$3,000	\$2,226	\$5,226

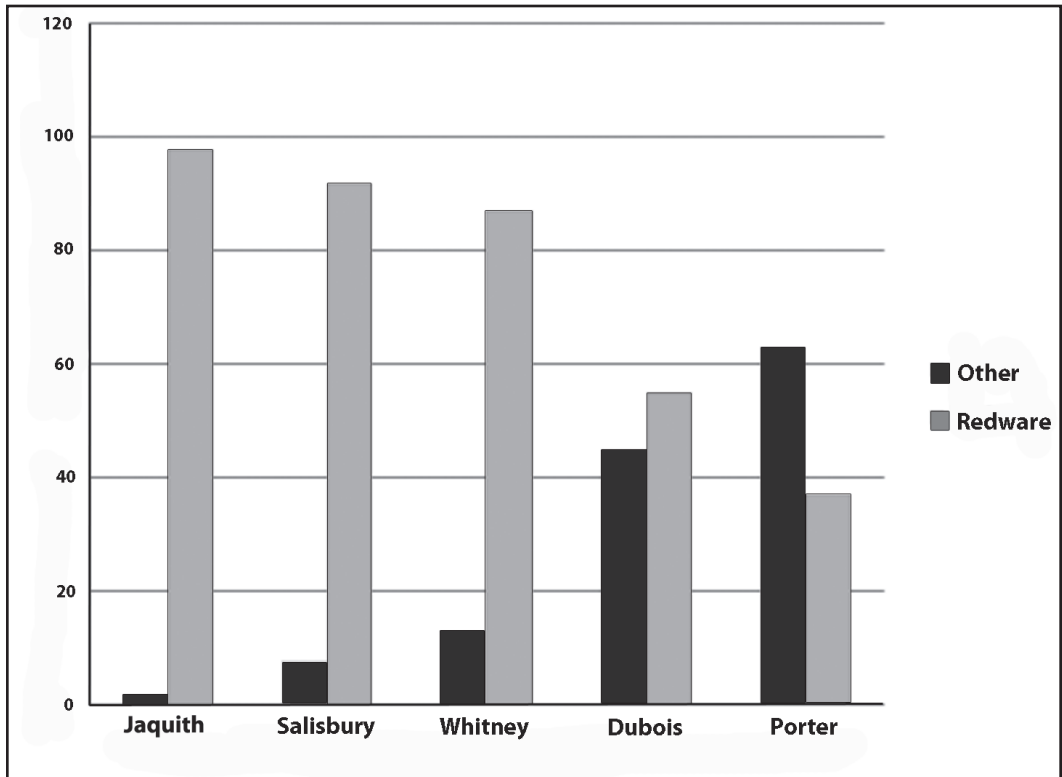


Figure 7. Comparison of redware to other wares for utilitarian vessels. (Figure by author.)

absolutes can be misleading, the data for the Vermont sites indicate that the total financial worth of the Jaquiths, Salisburys, Whitneys, and Bemises was not as high as the Porter or Dubois families. The Vermont farms were located in different parts of the country, and, as a result, values were likely different, as were values between Coventry and Bethlehem, New York. For the Vermont farms for which acreage information is available, the farms were larger than either the Porter or Dubois farms. However, the proportion of improved to unimproved land remains unknown. Given these data, the Vermont families appear to have been of some means.

Despite the limitations outlined above, it may be possible to compare differences in how the Vermont families consumed and discarded ceramics and other materials and what this behavior might say about their ideas for farm landscapes. As with the comparison between the Dubois and Porter sites, the ceramics from the Vermont sites were presented in raw counts versus the vessel counts from the

Porter site. These counts were converted to percentages for the purposes of comparison. The ceramic assemblages from the New York farms differ from the Vermont farms. Creamware is frequently found at sites dating well into the 19th century since potters continued to use this old technology to make plain utilitarian vessels (Majestic and O'Brien 1987; Miller 1980, 1991). With the advent of pearlware technology toward the end of the 18th century, potters no longer made more display-worthy objects out of creamware. At the Vermont sites, however, Berger recovered creamware, tableware, and even tea ware from contexts dated to the second half of the 19th century. Their presence at the Vermont sites may point to the use of older, second-hand, heirloom objects. Interestingly, none of the Vermont sites produced the remains of any creamware utilitarian vessels (FIG. 7). Rather the Vermont farmers were using vessels made from redware and stoneware that were likely produced locally (Majestic and O'Brien 1987). In comparison, the Porter and Dubois families used

more creamware utilitarian vessels that would have come from distant markets (FIG. 7).

The percentages of whiteware and pearlware found at the Jaquith and Salisbury sites are similar whereas the assemblages recovered from the Whitney and Bemis sites contained higher percentages of whiteware. The whiteware materials found at the Whitney and Bemis sites were mostly plain tablewares and it is not clear why more were found here than elsewhere. Perhaps most interesting is the lack of ironstone at any of the Vermont sites, with the exception of a few fragments of plain ironstone, despite the occupation of these homes during the second half of the 19th century.

The distribution of quantities of ceramic decorations indicates an apparent similarity between the Vermont assemblages with plain and undecorated wares dominating each assemblage (FIG. 8). Pronounced differences exist in the distribution of ceramic decorations between the assemblages recovered from the New York and Vermont sites. The Dubois and Porter families, particularly the Porter family, discarded a far higher percentage of decorated wares, particularly transfer-printed wares. As can be seen from Figure 9, the Vermont farms discarded less tea ware than the New York farms, and far

less than the Porters. The lack of tea ware at the Vermont sites may indicate a lack of concern and attention paid to a certain level of socializing that was evidently far more important to the two New York families, particularly the Porters.

There are various possible explanations for these differences between the New York and Vermont farms. The excavations at the New York farms were more extensive, Phase III data recovery excavations, whereas the excavations at the Vermont farms were preliminary Phase I investigations. It is possible that the differences between the New York and Vermont farms are therefore a result of differences in sample size and that more testing might produce a different representation of ceramic consumption at the sites. However, while a larger sample can never hurt, hundreds of 0.5 x 0.5 m (1.6x1.6-ft.) shovel tests and three 1 x 1 m (3.3 x 3.3-ft.) test units resulted in the recovery of 3,481 artifacts from the Vermont sites. In addition, as apparent from Figure 8, the recovered samples are very similar to each other. The consistency between the assemblages might indicate that the samples from the Vermont sites, although small, are representative.

Another explanation could be that the Porters were the exception among the

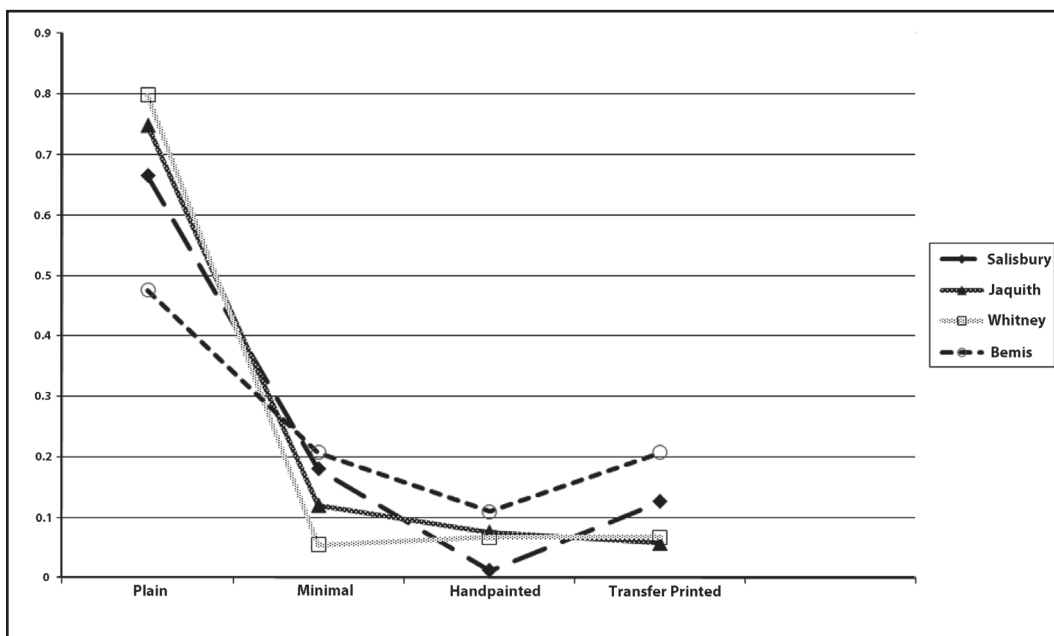


Figure 8. Distribution of ceramic decorations from the four Vermont sites. (Figure by author.)

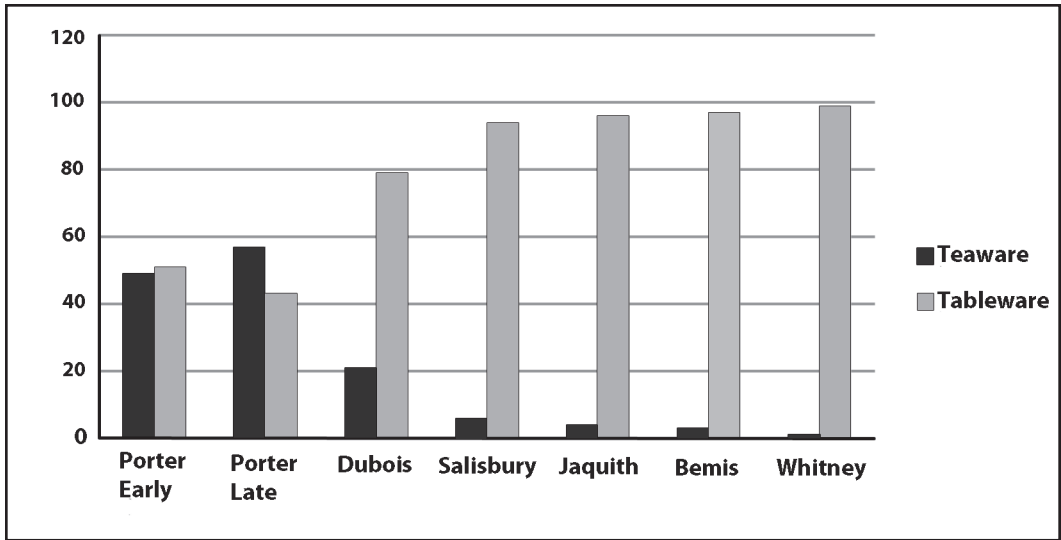


Figure 9. Comparison of quantities of teaware versus tableware. (Figure by author.)

19th-century farming families under discussion. Perhaps more materials from later in the 19th century were recovered from the Porter site simply because the Porters were far less particular about how they discarded their trash. Excavations within their yard space, therefore, produced a wider array of materials from the entire span of the 19th-century occupation of the Porter farm. On the other hand, it is possible that increased attention paid to the disposal of trash by the both the Dubois family and the Vermont farmers resulted in fewer materials being found during excavations of these sites from the later 19th century and more from the second and third quarters of the 19th century. It is possible that debris from the later 19th century might be located in small and select locations such as privies or locations off the property that were not excavated at the Dubois site or the Vermont sites. Excavations at the Bemis and Jaquith sites produced some evidence of distinct efforts to deposit rubbish away from the road and so, presumably, away from public view. At the Bemis site the majority of domestic debris was tossed over the hillside behind the house and, therefore, out of view of the road. Assuming that the abandoned cellar hole and remains found over the edge of the banks of the Williams River were from the occupants of the Jaquith site, then these remains might indicate an attempt to place remains somewhere out of view as

well. The interpretation of greater cleanliness might correspond with the rising ideology of Farmer Slack and Farmer Thrifty after the middle of the 19th century, resulting in a lower density of artifacts discarded about the property for archaeologists to recover.

It is also possible that the difference in ceramic assemblages between the New York and Vermont farms illustrates a difference in choice. Following the previous discussion about the expansion of consumerism in America during the 19th century, it is highly unlikely that the people of 19th-century southeastern Vermont did not know about changes in fashion and technology happening elsewhere throughout the country. For reasons that are beyond the scope of this paper, they may have chosen not to invest in those changes. Their apparent reliance on local wares for utilitarian vessels, as opposed to the imported wares found at the Dubois and Porter sites, indicates their reliance on local markets. The apparent lack of tea ware may indicate a lack of concern for the sort of socializing that would require the display of more expensive vessels, a type of socializing evidently taken quite seriously by the Porters (FIG. 9). As illustrated by Figures 5 and 8, the four Vermont farming families displayed far less interest in the more expensive decorated ceramics or ironstone. Although the assessed wealth of the four Vermont farms was less

than the Porter and Dubois farms, they were not poor by any means but were probably families in good standing. Each family possessed large farms (although the quantity of improved versus unimproved land remains unknown). In addition, the Jaquiths were prominent citizens in Andover. What's more, although the Bemis site produced slightly larger amounts of decorated ceramics (FIG. 8), the assemblage is still similar to the other Vermont farms despite the greater assessed wealth of the Bemis household.

Addressing these differences and similarities requires more in-depth historical and archaeological research, and there are several possible avenues for investigation. Although different aspects of the Dubois and Porter sites were compared, including farm production and the different family histories, the comparisons among the Vermont sites and between the Vermont and New York sites were based purely on the available data and therefore on the consumption and discard of ceramics. In this way, the discussion falls prey to the critique leveled by Wurst and Conklin (2008) that farmstead archaeology has not differed from that of urban environments because farmstead sites are not treated as farms. Echoing Beaudry's (2002) earlier critique, we archaeologists fail to recognize that these sites were farming landscapes and the locations of agricultural production. The residents of these sites made choices as farmers. We can only understand these differences by understanding the production that took place on these farms. However these data were not required by the level of investigation Berger conducted at the Vermont sites and, therefore, are not presently available.

What these comparisons illustrate is that, while sites like the Porter site clearly show that some farmers in the 19th century were connected to the wider world, both in terms of what they consumed and what they produced, the four Vermont farms show that other contemporary farming families were not consuming materials in quite the same manner. These four families may not have been taking part in changing patterns of consumption found elsewhere across the country. Future analysis of the communities in which these four Vermont families lived, the life cycles and landscape histories of each farmstead, as well

as the production of their farms may provide some answers.

It is possible that the relationship of this region in southeastern Vermont to the declining sheep market played a role in the patterns of consumption uncovered at these four farmsteads. The boom and bust cycle of sheep farming experienced in Vermont and throughout much of New England during the 19th century is well known. Sheep farming predominated during the first decades of the 19th century. Vermont farmers could not hope to compete with the expanding production of grain to the west so they raised sheep (Barron 1980: 323). Wool production placed Vermont within a wider market and Vermont farmers moved away from self-sufficiency, investing enormously in sheep. By the 1850s, sheep farming was in decline as a result of several factors including a lowering of protective tariffs and the opening up of western states to farming and transportation. Despite this general decline, the demand for wool increased during and immediately after the Civil War in response to the low availability of cotton (Steponaitis 1975: 60-67) and there was some demand for mutton that continued throughout the 19th century. The final decline occurred in response to a final and precipitous drop in wool prices during the 1880s and 1890s after the government removed additional tariffs (Barron 1980; Stover 1962; Tosi 1948: 59-60; VT DHP 1989).

As a result of the decline in sheep farming, Vermont experienced a drop in population as young people left the farms and went West, or left to work in the mill towns (Barron 1980). In his study of Orange County, Vermont, directly north of Berger's study area, Barron (1980) noted a 40% decline in population during the second half of the 19th century. It is possible that the abandonment of the Salisbury farm around the time of the Civil War was a direct result of this decline, followed by the subsequent abandonment of the Jaquith and Bemis sites a few decades later. Despite the decline in the marketability of sheep, farmers remained hesitant to switch to different products such as dairy. Commercial dairying was practiced in New England by the 1840s but its adoption was expensive and labor intensive (Barron 1980; Russell 1982). As a result, with the young leaving the state, the farmers of Vermont

lacked the labor force for dairy farming. Sheep farming therefore remained a more efficient use of the available resources until the final collapse of the sheep industry in Vermont by the end of the 19th century (Barron 1980). In conclusion, the archaeological evidence discussed above appears to indicate that the four Vermont farming families Berger investigated consumed ceramics differently than the Dubois and Porter families. The question why these families made different choices remains unanswered. It is possible, however, that the changes in productive capacities resulting from the declining sheep industry, and the resulting loss of connections to a wider market played a role in the consumer choices made by the Salisburys, Jaquiths, Bemises, and Whitneys.

Conclusion

Groover (2008: 11) describes the historical archaeology of farmsteads as the archaeology of rural places. The comparison of the Dubois and Porter sites provides further illustration of Rafferty's (1997; 2000) conclusions from the Porter site, illustrating that it is a fallacy to believe that rural people of the 19th century were detached from wider markets and that rural people lived within a society unaffected by issues of class and wealth. Yet the comparison between these two sites may also illustrate that the Porters were not as influenced by the dominant ideologies affecting how farmers maintained the landscapes of their farmsteads, as portrayed by the characters of Farmer Slack and Farmer Thrifty. This lack of influence may have resulted from the Porters' more rural location, but also perhaps because the Porters were very successful and therefore likely prominent in their smaller community such that they might have felt less pressure to conform to these ideologies than did the Dubois. Given their more rural milieu, as well as their apparent status as one of the leading families in the region, the Porters might not have felt the pressure to subscribe to the evolving new ideas of what a successful farm had to look like.

The Dubois household was less successful than the Porter household. The production of their farm does not appear to have increased, nor does it appear that they made the same

transition to capital-intensive farming that the Porters did. The ceramic assemblage recovered from the Dubois site may reflect this lack of success. The apparent cleanliness of their farm when compared to the Porters' farm and their desire to build new houses on their farmstead, however, might indicate an attention to outward appearances influenced by their location among wealthier farmers and by their proximity to Albany along a prominent road that led in and out of the city.

Although the Porter site, as discussed by Rafferty (1997; 2000), illustrates the connections of rural America to the wider nation in the 19th century, the Vermont farms may present a different picture. Contrary to Groover's (2008: 70) description of farmsteads from the second half of the 19th century, the Vermont farms may not have participated in consumption on a wider national scale to the same degree. In addition, despite the apparent differences in assessed wealth between the Bemises and the other three Vermont families, all four still purchased and discarded relatively similar ceramic assemblages. It would therefore appear that wealth did not impact the Bemises' ceramic consumption. Assuming that the residents of these farms knew about the changes going on in the national market and the availability of new styles of ceramics, it remains unclear why they were not purchasing these new decorative types. It is possible that these differences are the result of the relatively small sample size although the striking similarities between the four assemblages may indicate that the assemblages are representative. Perhaps the Vermont families were cleaner than the Porters in the later 19th century and therefore did not broadcast their debris all about their yards, but rather deposited their trash from the later 19th century in select places that remain unexcavated. It is also possible that the assemblages recovered from the farm sites in southeastern Vermont are the result of choices made by the Salisbury, Whitney, Bemises, and Jaquiths. Perhaps these families chose to buy locally-available utilitarian wares and continued to use older heirloom or second-hand relatively plain wares. These families do not appear to have taken part in the more ostentatious display of wealth associated with tea wares. These choices in consumption may bear some relation to the changes occurring in

southeastern Vermont during the second half of the 19th century. The communities these families lived in were facing dramatic population losses and those families that remained may have been facing risky choices in changing production at their farms as the sheep industry collapsed.

As discussed above, the comparison of the New York and Vermont farms may indicate that although the market for goods such as newer and higher-priced ceramics spread across the nation, there may have been rural areas where people chose to remain outside the wider market. Although the market may have been expanding to all corners of the nation and people in more rural locations such as Coventry, New York may have been taking an active part in it, it does not necessarily follow that everyone felt the need to participate equally even if they had the opportunity to do so. What remains a particularly interesting question for future research is why the assemblages uncovered at the four Vermont farms appear so similar, reflecting similar patterns of behavior among these four families. It remains to be answered why these four families, and possibly others like them, may have stayed outside of the expanding market for the consumption of new goods.

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